

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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Trans Fat Bill Goes into Effect January 2010

Effective January 1, 2010, California restaurants will no longer be able to use trans fat to prepare foods for the public. Baked goods will have the same fate the following year in 2011 per Assembly Bill 97 (AB 97). AB 97 was signed into law and added to the Health and Safety Code in 2008. The prohibition of trans fat will affect many food establishments. This law will require restaurants to switch to oils, margarines and shortenings that have less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving. Trans fat can be replaced with readily available heart healthy oils without changing the taste of foods. Some alternatives are monosaturated fats such as, olive and canola oils, and polyunsaturated fats, such as soybean, corn and sunflower oils.

This is a significant stride to improve the quality of life for Californians due to the proven direct relationship between diets high in trans fat content and LDL “bad” cholesterol levels, and increased risk of coronary heart disease. The FDA states that trans fat (also known as trans fatty acid) is made when manufacturers add hydrogen to vegetable oil. This process is called hydrogenation and it increases the shelf life and stability of oils and foods containing these fats. Foods that contain trans fats can be identified as those which have been fried in vegetable shortening, margarine, or any kind of partially hydrogenated vegetable oils. Until this law comes into effect, think twice about those cakes, cookies, pies and fried chicken next time you order them from your favorite restaurant.

For more information on AB 97 contact the San Bernardino County, Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Services at (909) 884-4056 or visit our website at www.sbcounty.gov/dehs.

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